

REMARKS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection set forth in the above-mentioned Official Action in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 6, 7, and 12-14 are now pending in the application, with Claim 1 being independent. Claims 1 and 12 have been amended. Claims 13 and 14 are newly-presented herein.

Applicants note the Examiner's assertion that only a cover sheet of the foreign priority application document filed July 7, 2004, exists in the PTO records. Applicants' undersigned representative respectfully submits that a complete certified copy had been filed. A copy of the postcard receipt acknowledged by the PTO evidencing that the entire certified copy had been submitted and received is enclosed as Appendix A. Favorable reconsideration and acknowledgment of receipt of the foreign priority document are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 6, 7, and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,383,263 (Ozawa et al.) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,000,792 (Koizumi et al.). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As recited in amended independent Claim 1, the present invention relates to a discharging apparatus having a discharge head in which a plurality of discharge nozzles are arranged to discharge liquids supplied from supply ports through discharge ports. The

apparatus includes joint members, a connecting member, and a pump. The joint members are equal in number to a number of the discharge nozzles and are arranged to face the discharge nozzles. Each joint member operates to cover either the supply port or discharge port when removing the liquid in a discharge nozzle. The connecting member is selectively connectable to each of the joint members. The pump is for being connected to the connecting member and removing the liquid in each of the discharge nozzles by applying a pressure difference between the supply port and discharge port of each discharge nozzle facing one of the joint members selectively connected to the connecting member.

Ozawa et al. is directed to a liquid-jet apparatus that, as shown in Fig. 1, includes a joining means 110, which is joined with an ejecting orifice 109 of a tip end of the recording head to receive the liquid discharged from the orifice 109, which forms flying liquid droplets. The joining means 110 is communicatively connected with liquid-introducing means 106 so that the joining means 110 can be brought to a suction state by operating the suction mechanism of the liquid-introducing means 106. The tip portion of the joining means 110 has a shape and a construction capable of being joined with the tip portion of the recording head 104 (col. 3, lines 36-51).

However, Ozawa et al. does not disclose or suggest a discharging apparatus comprising at least a connecting member selectively connectable to each of the joint members, as recited in amended independent Claim 1. Thus, Ozawa et al. fails to disclose

or suggest all the features of the present invention, as recited in amended independent Claim 1.

Koizumi et al. was cited as illustrating an apparatus provided with ink jet recording heads of a line type, capable of executing a full-color recording (at Fig. 20) and for disclosing a filter, composed of ridge meshes, capable of removing fine dust particles and air bubbles. However, Koizumi et al. is not believed to remedy the deficiencies of Ozawa et al. noted above with respect to amended independent Claim 1. That is, Koizumi et al. also does not disclose or suggest a discharging apparatus comprising at least a connecting member selectively connected to each of the joint members, as recited in amended independent Claim 1.

Accordingly, amended independent Claim 1 is patentable over the citations of record. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection are respectfully requested.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the present invention is patentably defined by amended independent Claim 1. Dependent Claims 6, 7, and 12-14 are also allowable, in their own right, for defining features of the present invention in addition to those recited in amended independent Claim 1. Individual consideration of the dependent claims is requested.

This Amendment After Final Rejection, is an earnest attempt to advance prosecution and reduce the number of issues, and is believed to clearly place this

application in condition for allowance. This Amendment was not earlier presented because Applicants earnestly believed that the prior Amendment placed the subject application in condition for allowance. Accordingly, entry of this Amendment under 37 CFR 1.116 is respectfully requested.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submits that the present invention is patentably defined by Claims 1, 6, 7, and 12-14, and that the present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the rejection set forth in the above-noted final Office Action, and an early Notice of Allowability are requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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